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The Fifth Estate

RADIO TELEVISION CABLE SATELLITE

Broadcasting Jan 4

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57th Year 1988

Big Buy in Cable

&

Big Deal in L.A.

Vol. 114 No. 1

Broadcasting Jan 4

Storer cable systems deal sets record...page 43.

Cable, telco battle over Cerritos system...page 45.

Independents head West: INTV 1988...page 47.

BIG BUY □ Consortium of cable operators buy Storer Communications cable systems for total consideration in excess of $2.8 billion, making it largest cable deal ever. **PAGE 43.**

INDEPENDENT VOICE □ In this "At Large" with BROADCASTING editors, Association of Independent Television Stations President Preston Padden shares his views on issues, events and technologies shaping independent television industry. **PAGE 47.**

ON THEIR OWN □ Independent stations meet in Los Angeles this week for their annual convention, revisiting 1987 and looking ahead to '88. What's ahead, agenda and list of exhibitors begins on **PAGE 55.**

FOX REPORT CARD □ Fox Broadcasting Co. affiliates say programing is both best and worst of network's performance to date. **PAGE 90.**

VINTAGE VIEWING □ StarCast, new programing network for independent stations based in Orlando, Fla., plans to offer independent television stations satellite feed of 18 hours of "vintage" TV shows, news, sports, weather and business briefs. **PAGE 94.**

ESPN'S FOOTBALL FINISH □ ESPN's first year of offering its eight-game regular season NFL package was, by all indications, success. San Francisco-Los Angeles Rams game gives sports network eight-game, regular-season combined average of 12.4 rating. **PAGE 98.**

TALK AROUND THE CLOCK □ Beginning today (Jan. 4), Sun Radio Network offers AM station operators 24-hour national talk/information programing service. **PAGE 120.**

EYE ON SPENDING □ Radio Advertising Bureau president and chief executive officer, Bill Stakelin, tells RAB members to keep watch over consumer spending behavior in 1988 as barometer of broadcast advertising expenditures. **PAGE 121.**

HART BURN □ Since announcing his intention to re-enter presidential race, Gary Hart has let it be known "that an age of television 'sound bites' produces bite-sized policies." Some journalists disagree. **PAGE 123.**

POINT MAN □ Washington communications attorney Jack Cole sees his 30 years of representing cable as continuous struggle against regulatory restraints. **PAGE 143.**

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Errata

In November Arbitron Sweeps chart (BROADCASTING, Dec. 21), **NBC-TV household figure for Lima, Ohio, should have been 17,000.**

Engineers 22d annual television conference. Opryland hotel, Nashville. Information: (914) 761-1100.

Jan. 30—Deadline for entries in National Media Awards sponsored by *American Diabetes Association*, for excellence in reporting on diabetes. Information: (703) 549-1500.

Jan. 30-Feb. 3—*National Religious Broadcasters* 45th annual convention and exposition. Sheraton Washington. Information: (201) 428-5400.

February

Feb. 1—Deadline for entries in sixth annual JC Penney-University of Missouri Television Awards for Community Leadership, sponsored by *School of Journalism, University of Missouri-Columbia*. Information: (314) 882-7771.

Feb. 1—Deadline for entries in Silver Gavel Awards, sponsored by *American Bar Association*, honoring American news and entertainment media. Information: (312) 988-5000.

Feb. 2-3—*Arizona Cable Television Association* annual meeting. Hyatt Regency, Phoenix, Ariz. Information: (602) 257-9338.

■ **Feb. 3**—*New York Television Academy* drop-in luncheon. Speaker: Nickolas Davatzes, president and chief executive officer, Arts & Entertainment Network, on "The Growth of a Cable Network." Copacabana, New York. Information: (212) 765-2450.

Feb. 3-7—*International Radio and Television Society* faculty/industry seminar, "A Message for the Medium: Programing That Fits." Roosevelt hotel, New York. Information: (212) 867-6650.

Feb. 4—*International Radio and Television Society* newsmaker luncheon. Waldorf-Astoria, New York.

■ **Feb. 5**—Deadline for nominations for Edward R. Murrow award for outstanding contributions to public radio, sponsored by *Corporation for Public Broadcasting*. Information: (202) 955-5211.

Feb. 7-9—*Arkansas Broadcasters Association* winter meeting. Arlington hotel, Hot Springs, Ark.

Feb. 7-12—*National Association of Broadcasters* 23d annual management development seminars for broadcast engineers, "Achieving Personal and Professional Excellence." University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Ind. Information: (202) 429-5346.

■ **Feb. 8**—*New York Television Academy* drop-in dinner, "Black Presence in TV: The New Force and the Economic Reality of the Black Marketplace." Copacabana, new York. Information: (212) 765-2450.

Feb. 10—"Success in Radio and TV Sales," session sponsored by *American Women in Radio and Television, Washington chapter*. National Association of Broadcasters, Washington. Information: (202) 659-3494.

■ **Feb. 10**—*New York Television Academy* drop-in luncheon. Speaker: Morton Downey Jr., host of *Morton Downey Jr. Show* on WWOR-TV New York. Copacabana, New York. Information: (212) 765-2450.

■ **Feb. 10**—*Illinois Broadcasters Association* winter sales seminar. Galesburg, Ill. Information: (217) 753-2636.

Feb. 11-13—19th annual Country Ra dio Seminar, sponsored by *Country Radio Broadcasters Association*. Opryland hotel, Nashville. Information: (615) 327-4488.

Feb. 12—*Southern California Broadcasters Association* 3d annual Sunny Creative Radio Awards presentation. Registry hotel, Los Angeles. Information: (213) 466-4481.

Feb. 16-17—*Wisconsin Broadcasters Association* annual convention and legislative reception. Madison, Wis.

Feb. 17-19—Texas Cable Show, sponsored by *Texas Cable Television Association*. Convention Center, San Antonio, Tex.

Feb. 18-19—*Broadcast Financial Management Association* board of directors meeting. San Diego Marriott, San Diego.

Feb. 18-20—"Minorities and Communications: A Preview of the Future," conference sponsored by *Howard University School of Communications*. Howard Inn and Blackburn Center, Howard University campus, Washington. Information: (202) 636-7491.

Feb. 24—Deadline for entries in Edward R. Murrow Brotherhood Awards, which "pay tribute to the finest in television and radio news production that best promotes human understanding and good relations among people," sponsored by *Cinema/Radio/TV unit of B'nai B'rith*. Information: (212) 686-3199.

Feb. 24—*Federal Communications Bar Association* luncheon. Speaker: Diane Killory, FCC general counsel. Marriott, Washington.

Feb. 25-28—*NATPE International* 25th annual con-

Major Meetings

Jan. 6-10—*Association of Independent Television Stations* annual convention. Century Plaza, Los Angeles. Future convention: Jan. 4-8, 1989, Century Plaza, Los Angeles.

Jan. 23-25—*Radio Advertising Bureau's* Managing Sales Conference. Hyatt Regency hotel, Atlanta.

Jan. 29-30—*Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers* 22d annual television conference. Opryland hotel, Nashville. Future meeting: Feb. 3-4, 1989. St. Francis hotel, San Francisco.

Jan. 30-Feb. 3—*National Religious Broadcasters* 44th annual convention. Sheraton Washington and Omni Shoreham hotels, Washington. Future meetings: Jan. 28-Feb. 1, 1989, and Jan. 27-31, 1990, both Sheraton Washington and Omni Shoreham, Washington.

Feb. 11-13—19th annual Country Radio Seminar, sponsored by *Country Radio Broadcasters Association*. Opryland hotel, Nashville.

Feb. 17-19—Texas Cable Show, sponsored by *Texas Cable Television Association*. Convention Center, San Antonio, Tex.

Feb. 26-28—*NATPE International* 25th annual convention. George Brown Convention Center, Houston. Future convention: Houston, Feb. 24-26,1989.

March 21-23—*Satellite Broadcasting and Communication Association* trade show. Bally's, Las Vegas. Information: (800) 654-9276.

April 9-12—*National Association of Broadcasters* 66th annual convention. Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas. Future conventions: Las Vegas, April 29-May 2, 1989; Atlanta, March 31-April 3, 1990; Las Vegas, April 13-16, 1991; Las Vegas, April 11-14, 1992, and Las Vegas, and Las Vegas, May 1-4 (tentative), 1933.

April 10-12—*Cabletelevision Advertising Bureau* seventh annual conference. Waldorf-Astoria, New York.

April 10-13—Public television annual membership meeting of *Public Broadcasting Service* and *National Association of Public Television Stations*. Marriott Crystal Gateway, Arlington, Va.

April 17-20—*Broadcast Financial Management Association* 28th annual meeting. Hyatt Regency, New Orleans. Future meetings: April 9-12, 1989, Loews Anatole, Dallas, and April 18020, 1990. Hyatt Regency, San Francisco.

April 28-May 3—*National Cable Television Association* annual convention. Los Angeles Convention Center.

May 18-21—*American Association of Advertising Agencies* 70th annual convention. Greenbrier, White Sulphur Springs, W. Va.

May 18-22—*National Public Radio* annual public radio conference. Adam's Mark hotel, St. Louis. Information: (202) 822-2000.

June 8-11—*American Women in Radio and Television* 37th annual convention. Westin William Penn, Pitsburgh.

June 9-12—*Broadcast Promotion and Marketing Executives/Broadcast Designers Association* 32d annual seminar. Bonaventure, Los Angeles. Future meeting: June 21-25, 1989, Renaissance Center, Detriot.

June 18-21—*American Advertising Federation* annual convention. Century Plaza, Los Angeles.

July 31-Aug. 3—*Cable Television Administration and Marketing Society* 15th annual meeting. Westin Copley Place, Boston.

Sept. 7-9—Eastern Cable Show, sponsored by *Southern Cable Television Association*. Merchandise Mart, Atlanta.

Sept. 14-17—Radio '88, sponsored by the *National Association of Broadcasters*. Washington. Future meetings: Sept. 13-16, 1989, New Orleans; Sept. 12-15, 1990, Boston, and Sept. 11-14 (tentative), 1991, San Francisco.

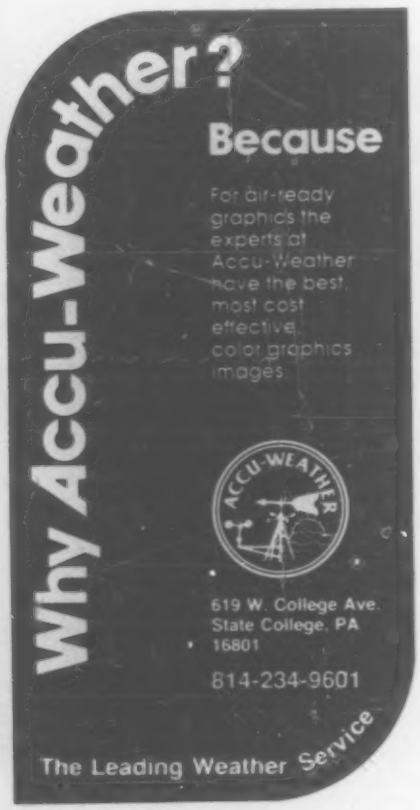
Sept. 23-27—*International Broadcasting Convention*. Metropole conference and exhibition center, Grand hotel and Brighton Center, Brighton, England.

Oct. 14-18—*Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers* 130th technical conference and equipment exhibit. Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, New York. Future conference: Oct. 22-27, 1989, Los Angeles Convention Center.

Nov. 30-Dec. 3—*Radio-Television News Directors Association* annual international conference and exhibition. Convention Center, Las Vegas. Information: (202) 659-6510.

June 17-23—19th International Television Symposium. Montreux, Switzerland.

Oct. 17-19—*Television Bureau of Advertising* annual meeting. Bally's, Las Vegas.



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vention. George Brown Convention Center, Houston.

Feb. 27—"Television: A Medium Focuses on Itself," panel sponsored by *New School for Social Research*, New School, New York. Information: (212) 741-5690.

March

March 3—*International Radio and Television Society* Gold Medal banquet. Recipient: CBS's *60 Minutes*. Waldorf-Astoria, New York. Information: (212) 867-6650.

March 6—Ninth annual *Academy of Television Arts and Sciences* college awards presentation. Registry hotel, Los Angeles. Information: (818) 763-2975.

March 6—*International Radio and Television Society* Second Tuesday seminar. Viacom Conference Center, New York. Information: (212) 867-6650.

March 9—"Issues Before the FCC: An Evening with Diane Killory," general counsel, FCC, sponsored by *American Women in Radio and Television, Washington chapter*. National Association of Broadcasters, Washington. Information: (202) 659-3494.

March 9-10—*Association of National Advertisers* television advertising workshop. Plaza hotel, New York. Information: (212) 697-5950.

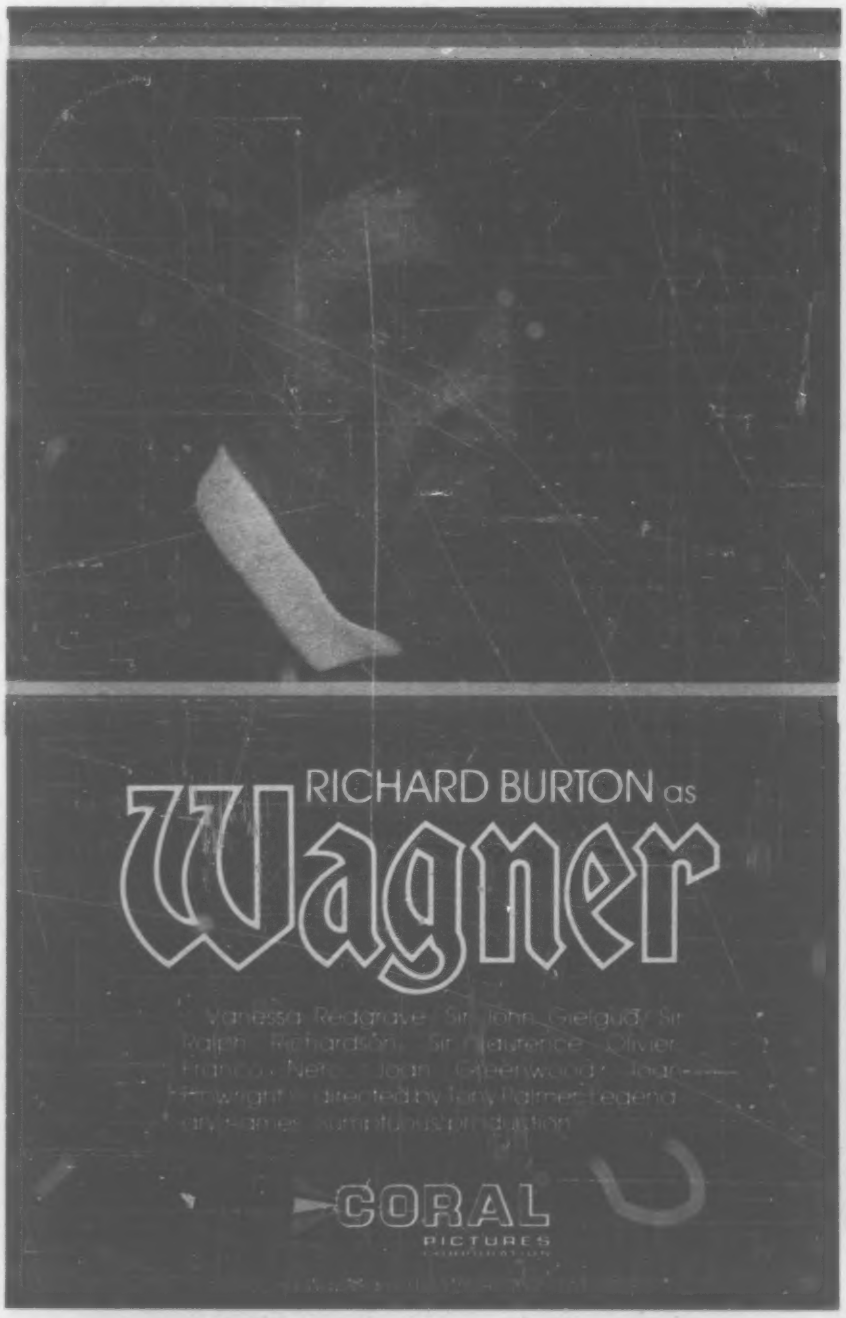
■ **March 11**—*Academy of Television Arts and Sciences* forum luncheon. Speaker: Michael Checkland, director-general, BBC. Beverly Wilshire hotel, Los Angeles. Information: (818) 953-7575.

March 13-15—First Amendment Congress, organized in 1979 by *Jean Otto, Society of Professional Journalists*, who is now with *Rocky Mountain News*. Marriott City Center hotel, Denver. Information: (303) 492-6480.

March 13-15—*West Virginia Broadcasters Association* spring meeting. Marriott hotel, Charleston, W. Va.

March 14-15—*National Association of Broadcasters* group fly-in for radio group heads. Hyatt Regency

Continued on page 127.



RADIO TELEVISION CABLE SATELLITE

Broadcasting Jan 4

Vol. 114 No. 1

TOP OF THE WEEK

ATC, Comcast, TCI/Bass win Storer cable prize

Consortium's $2.8-billion purchase of KKR's 1.45 million subscribers is largest cable deal in history

A consortium of cable operators has bought the Storer Communications cable systems owned by Kohlberg Kravis Roberts & Co. for consideration totaling more than $2.8 billion, making it the largest cable deal ever. American Television & Communications, Comcast and Taft Cable Partners (the last a 50-50 joint venture of Tele-Communications Inc. and the Bass Group) signed a letter of intent on Christmas Eve to buy the cable systems that have been on the block since last summer. The Storer systems have 1,450,000 subscribers in 12 states. The purchase price works out to slightly less than $2,000 per subscriber, below the $2,200 KKR reportedly wanted originally.

Although the final numbers have not been worked out, the three partners will pay roughly $1.7 billion for the stock in SCI Holdings and also put up more than $1.1 billion in assets in exchange for the so-called "restricted cash" that had been one of the problems looming over the sale of the systems. The partners will also assume the $2.25 billion in debt of SCI Holdings, 97% owned by KKR. Of that debt, $1.6 billion is in junk bonds carrying an average interest rate of between 13% and 15%, which are scheduled for payment between 1990 and 1997.

(Moody's Investor Service said last week that it was reviewing the debt of SCI, for possible upgrade, and the debt of the three buying partners.)

The partners intend to run the company as a stand-alone operation for the foreseeable

STORER COMMUNICATIONS

future, since a number of tax and financial complications prevent them from economically splitting up the company. That was the path taken by ATC, TCI, Comcast, Daniels and Century after their purchase of Group W for $1.7-billion, the record price for a cable deal before the Storer agreement. With the repeal of the general utilities doctrine of the tax code, tax-free liquidation of a company has become more difficult.

According to the letter of intent, the partners will buy the 212 million shares of outstanding SCI Holdings stock for between $9.25 and $9.75 per common share, which would roughly translate to $2 billion. The letter also calls for SCI warrant holders to "receive the same consideration as Holdings' shareholders, net of the applicable warrant exercise price." Those warrants, when exercised, will reduce the total consideration by $234 million.

The three partners also will put up more than $1.1 billion in assets to get the "restricted cash" out of the company. (The cash is restricted because of certain debt covenants under which SCI is operating.) Those assets could include cable systems, securities or bank loans, for instance. ATC and Taft appeared to be leaning towards putting up cable systems to get the Storer cash out of the company, while Comcast appeared to favor putting up securities for the cash.

Benjamin Diesbach, general manager of Taft Cable, said the Storer systems were "a very attractive group of properties." Bernard Gallagher, vice president and treasurer at Comcast, said of Storer: "We think it's a great company" with a "nice group of cable systems."

There was also the realization the Storer buy represented its own unusual set of circumstances. The nature of the long-term, junk bond debt, the tax complications in liquidation and the restricted internal cash were the main problems facing potential buyers. Those factors entered in the negotiations. "I guess the biggest problem was price," said David O'Hayre, senior vice president, investments, ATC, as both sides

Concentrating on cable television

Before the Storer purchase, the nation's 10 largest MSO's owned and managed cable systems with 19.6 million basic subscribers, or 45% of the nation's basic cable subscribers. That number increases to 49% when Tele-Communications Inc.'s affiliations with other companies are included.

TCI, the nation's largest cable multiple system operator, says that it currently owns and manages cable systems with 3.5 million basic subscribers. A total of 5.2 million basic cable subscribers are accounted for on its financial balance sheet, including those systems owned but not managed by TCI. Included in these figures are the one-million-plus subscribers from Heritage systems purchased by TCI in 1987 (400,000 subscribers are in systems managed by Heritage) for more than $800 million.

TCI also claims three million subscribers through its affiliated companies, although these are not consolidated in TCI's financial statements. Included in this total, for example, are United Cable's 1.145 million subscribers, of which TCI owns 24%.

In addition to United, TCI holds varying interests in Bresnan Communications, Cablenet Associates, Cencom Cable, Communications Services, Lenfest Group, Marcus Communications, Memphis CATV, Taft Cable Partners, Televents, TKR Cable and UA Communications.

The second largest cable MSO, American Television & Communications Corp. (ATC), claims approximately 3.6 million basic subscribers, including 456,000 subscribers in Paragon Communications, a joint venture set up with Houston Industries after its partial acquisition of Group W cable systems in 1986.

Continental is the third largest MSO, with 2,030,000 basic subscribers. That figure includes the company's purchase of American Cablesystems, set to close later this year. That figure also incorporates the company's percentage of jointly held cable operations.

Although Storer may be divided between ATC, Comcast and Taft Cable (the TCI-Robert Bass Group joint venture), its estimated 1.45 million subscribers at the end of December made it the fourth largest MSO.

Cox Cable, the fifth largest MSO, reported 1,406,922 basic

Continues on page 44

compromised from their original offers. "It's a good deal," said O'Hayre. "A little less than $2,000 a subscriber is a high but fair price for this thing," he said. Added another source close to the negotiations, "This is not the world's largest bargain" but "it seems to be the market price." One participant likened it to the Group W deal, which at the time seemed to be made at the market price but after system values went up, it became, in hindsight, a bargain. "I'm hoping for something similar in this deal," said that observer, but he doubted it would look as good as the Group W deal does now. The consortium paid $1.7 billion for Group W's 2.1 million cable subscribers.

As for Storer, the "plan now is that three companies have invested in this company and [will] run it as a separate company indefinitely," said O'Hayre. Although the percentage breakdowns have not been devised, a source said "there's been discussion that it would be a third, a third, a third." It is expected that a separate board of directors and management will run the new company, with the owners expected to be represented on the board. But it is also possible that the three partners could manage separately a portion of the new company. That solution would be less expensive, but more complicated, said one source, than running it as a unified entity. The partners said it was too early to discuss changes in senior management, but O'Hayre said he hoped those at the system level and some of regional people "would stay with the company."

Taft Cable, which has almost 200,000 subscribers, will probably put up some or all of its cable systems in exchange for the "restricted" cash, sources at Taft and TCI said. O'Hayre said. "We think at least some of it will be done that way" at ATC but other assets could be included.

Comcast seemed to be leaning toward putting up securities. "We're looking at the alternatives," said Gallagher. The three partners, if the split is equal, would have to put up financial assets in the neighborhood of $366 million, or cable systems that had roughly 183,000 subscribers, going by an average $2,000-per-subscriber price.

One of the loose ends surrounding the deal concerns KKR's interest in SCI Television. George Gillett, owner of Gillett Broadcasting, bought the Storer broadcast station group last summer for $1.3 billion, and it is being operated now as a joint venture of Gillett-controlled entities (55%) and KKR (45%). A Storer spokesman said the price the three cable companies are paying for the stock of SCI Holdings contains a value for KKR's 45% portion of SCI Television. When the transaction is completed, the cable partners will own the Storer cable systems free and clear, while SCI Television will operate as its own entity. Now it is a subsidiary of SCI Holdings. A KKR spokesman said the company intends to remain part of its joint venture with Gillett. That is believed to mean that KKR would compensate the cable buyers for the value of its 45% stake in SCI Television, presently apart of SCI Holdings. When Gillett and Storer set up the joint venture, Storer put up $225 million in debt and equity as part of the overall $1.3-billion purchase. That may be a guidepost for the final disposition of KKR's interest in SCI Television.

The proposed sale brings to an end the saga of Storer's cable properties. Storer Communications went on the market in 1985 (Comcast, at the time, aggressively pursued the company), and was bought by KKR in a $2.5-billion leveraged buyout. KKR sold the broadcast properties to Gillett and hired three investment firms—Morgan Stanley, Drexel Burnham Lambert, and Shearson Lehman—last summer to sell the cable systems. Those firms were "disengaged" in early December, after which talks with the cable consortium, which had earlier expressed an interest in the deal, picked up again. That culminated in the agreement reached on Dec. 24.

A formal contract is expected in the next few weeks with the transaction scheduled to close in the second quarter of 1988. In addition to the federal regulatory approvals, the partners will need the approval of the local jurisdictions in which Storer operates cable systems, which one partner estimates in the hundreds.

The cable partners involved in the sale know they may be operating under the Storer name long after there is, in effect, no Storer. "The fundamental thing that everybody who wanted to be a part of this was that you better be prepared to make an investment, forever, in SCI. If you have any other idea or intent, you can't be apart of this transaction," a source said. □

Continued from page 43.

subscribers as of September. A separate 50% joint venture in New York's Staten Island adds another 25,000 basic subscribers.

Sixth is Warner, which said it had 1,389,705 basic subscribers as of the end of November. Comcast, which follows Warner and Cox with approximately 1.31 million basic subscribers as of late November, could jump ahead of both of them depending on the number of subscribers that are added from its part in the Storer acquisition. The current Comcast tally includes the systems that it owns and operates, as well as those managed in limited partnerships.

United, which ranked eighth in size, reported 1,145,233 basic subscribers at the end of November, including 183,369 subscribers in limited partnerships managed by United.

Privately held Newhouse said it had 1,077,383 basic subscribers as of Dec. 18, through its New Channels, Vision Cable and Metrovision cable systems, placing it ninth on the list. Viacom counted 1,020,300 basic customers as of Sept. 30, putting it in 10th.

The figures in the chart at right, supplied to BROADCASTING by the individual companies, differ from those used by the Motion Picture Association of America, which has been a vocal critic of the increased concentration of ownership in the cable industry. MPAA, for instance, said that before the Storer purchase, the top 10 companies accounted for 55.8% of all cable subscribers. MPAA claims that TCI has 9,387,000 subscribers before the Storer purchase, while the company says it has, at most, 8.2 million.

Last week, MPAA President Jack Valenti charged that "the sale of Storer puts the cable industry in a tighter vise of concentration." Valenti claimed that "the five largest cable companies will now control, directly or indirectly, almost 47% of all subscribers...A few mega-monopolies are taking over this delivery of television to the home, and nobody seems to give a damn."

The top 10, before Storer

(Subscriber figures in millions*)

Company	*Owned systems*	*Affiliated systems*
1. Tele-Communications Inc	5.20	8.20
2. ATC	3.60	3.60
3. Continental Cablevision	2.03	2.03
4. Storer Communications	1.45	1.45
5. Cox Cable	1.41	1.41
Top five total	**13.69**	**16.69**
6. Warner Cable Communications	1.39	1.39
7. Comcast Cable	1.31	1.31
8. United Cable Television	1.15	0**
9. Newhouse Broadcasting	1.08	1.08
10. Viacom Cable	1.02	1.02
Second five total	5.95	4.80
Top 10 total	**19.64**	**21.49**

Note: By using a base of 44 million cable subscribers, the top five MSO's represent 31% and 38% of owned and owned/affiliated systems, respectively. The corresponding percentages for the top 10 are 45% and 49%.

*Based on figures supplied to BROADCASTING by individual companies.

**Figure is zero because United figures in affiliated column are already included in TCI's 8.2 million.

Ho-ho-hummm... NBC wins Christmas week

Nielsen		Net		Show		AGB
1.	23.5/39	C	60 Minutes	2.	22.1/36
2.	19.6/31	C	Garfield Christmas	11.	17.5/27
3.	19.4/32	A	Growing Pains	1.	22.6/35
4.	19.4/30	N	NBC Monday Movie	3.	21.8/32
5.	18.6/29	C	Claymation Christmas	13.	17.3/25
6.	18.4/30	C	Murder, She Wrote	6.	19.2/29
7.	17.9/34	N	Golden Girls	5.	20.7/36
8.	17.5/30	A	Who's the Boss?	4.	21.4/34
9.	17.4/31	A	Monday Night Football	16.	16.6/29
10.	17.1/29	N	Matlock	9.	17.7/28
11.	16.6/27	N	Christmas in Washington	15.	16.7/27
12.	15.8/24	C	Newhart	17.	16.5/24
13.	15.7/30	N	Amen	7.	18.2/32
14.	15.6/27	A	Moonlighting	8.	18.1/29
15.	15.5/32	N	J.J. Starbuck	23.	15.2/29
16.	15.4/27	N	NBC Sunday Movie	25.	15.0/25
17.	15.3/26	C	CBS Sunday Movie	22.	15.2/24
18.	15.0/38	N	Cosby Show	12.	17.4/39
19.	15.0/24	N	Family Ties	10.	17.6/27
20.	14.6/26	N	NBC Wed. Movie Special	26.	14.9/27
21.	14.4/25	A	Hooperman	33.	13.3/23
22.	14.4/22	C	Designing Women	18.	16.2/23
23.	14.1/24	A	ABC Sun. Movie Special	24.	15.2/24
24.	14.1/25	N	Highway to Heaven	14.	17.0/31
25.	13.8/22	N	My Two Dads	20.	15.8/24
26.	13.6/25	A	Perfect Strangers	37.	12.3/22
27.	13.6/34	N	Different World	19.	16.1/36
28.	13.3/24	C	Jake and the Fatman	29.	14.2/24
29.	13.2/26	N	227	21.	15.8/28
30.	13.0/23	A	Head of the Class	35.	12.6/23
31.	12.3/22	A	Slap Maxwell Story	52.	9.9/17
32.	12.1/30	N	Cheers	27.	14.5/32
33.	11.8/27	C	Mandrell Christmas	28.	14.3/30
34.	11.8/23	N	Facts of Life	30.	14.2/25
35.	11.7/22	A	Dynasty	45.	11.1/20
36.	11.5/25	C	CBS Friday Movie Special	31.	13.7/28
37.	11.5/19	C	Cagney and Lacey	32.	13.3/21
38.	11.4/19	A	MacGyver	38.	12.0/19
39.	11.3/21	A	Thirtysomething	36.	12.3/22
40.	11.1/18	A	Disney Sunday Movie	49.	10.2/16
41.	10.6/20	C	Equalizer	42.	11.3/20
42.	10.5/22	N	Miami Vice	39.	11.8/23
43.	10.3/22	A	20/20	50.	10.2/21
44.	10.1/25	N	Beverly Hills Buntz	40.	11.5/25
45.	9.9/19	C	CBS Saturday Movie	43.	11.3/20
46.	9.8/25	N	L.A. Law	47.	10.9/23
47.	9.5/20	A	Mr. Belvedere	46.	10.9/22
48.	9.5/16	N	Crime Story	44.	11.2/18
49.	9.2/15	A	Spenser: For Hire	62.	8.8/13
50.	9.8/17	A	Ohara	61.	8.8/16
51.	8.9/15	N	Our House	34.	12.7/21
52.	8.5/16	N	NBC News Special	53.	9.8/17
53.	8.4/21	A	ABC Thursday Movie	57.	9.4/21
54.	8.4/17	C	West 57th	55.	9.7/19
55.	8.3/18	N	Private Eye	48.	10.2/21
56.	8.2/15	C	Top of the Pops: Christmas	51.	9.9/18
57.	7.9/17	A	Pursuit of Happiness	59.	9.3/18
58.	7.9/13	C	Houston Knights	66.	7.6/12
59.	7.9/18	N	Rags to Riches	60.	8.9/19
60.	7.7/15	A	Sable	63.	8.3/15
61.	7.6/19	C	Bugs Bunny's Christmas	58.	9.3/21
62.	7.5/19	C	Santabear	56.	9.7/22
63.	7.4/19	C	CBS Thurs. Movie Special	54.	9.7/21
64.	7.2/16	A	I Married Dora	65.	8.0/17
65.	6.6/15	A	Full House	64.	8.0/17
66.	5.5/11	C	The Room	67.	6.5/13
67.	4.0/10	A	Santa Claus: Making of	68.	5.3/12

High definition in high gear in '88

ATSC balloting, FCC steering committee meeting on HDTV on agenda for early part of new year

The interest in high-definition television that intensified throughout the television industry in 1987 has carried unabated into the new year. In addition to a meeting scheduled for later this month in Hawaii continuing a dialogue between officials of the National Association of Broadcasters and Japan's NHK (see page 112) and an HDTV session set for this Saturday (Jan. 9) at the Association of Independent Television Stations convention in Los Angeles (see page 76), several developments are now taking shape to affect the terrestrial broadcasting, cable carriage, production, regulation and standard-setting aspects of HDTV.

The Advanced Television Systems Committee, representing a confederation of industry groups interested in exploring advanced television systems, ended balloting last Thursday (Dec. 31) on whether to accept the formal document that, according to its stated purpose, "defines the basic characteristics of the video signals associated with origination equipment operating in the 1,125-line, 60 hertz high-definition television production system." The standard, developed by the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers at the request of ATSC, sets down the scanning parameters, system colorimitry, bandwidth and other specifications to be included in HDTV videotape recorders, cameras and related equipment.

Although results of the voting were unavailable at press time last week, indications were the production standard would be adopted. Sources close to ATSC speculated that most of the 45 companies that were mailed ballots had established positions on the production standard before voting began and were unlikely to have changed them. The standard was sent to a vote of the full ATSC after its T3 subcommittee examining HDTV systems approved it by a vote of 26 for, none against and nine abstentions. If passed, the standard will be submitted to the National Radio Standards Institute for possible passage as the American voluntary standard. It is now being used by the U.S. State Department to outline the American position before the International Radio Consultative Committee (CCIR).

As the ballots were sent out, letters were also mailed to ATSC members from proponents of both sides of the issue. In a letter dated Dec. 10, Michael Sherlock, president of NBC operations and technical services, listed the reasons the network was opposing the proposal: "After you have given the question sufficient thought you will agree that establishment of an ATSC standard at this time is counterproductive to the promulgation of ATV service in the United States," Sherlock wrote.

Sherlock based his argument on two central points: that the proposed system has failed to gain international acceptance and that it is not "friendly" to the existing NTSC standards. ATSC decided to pursue 1,125/60 standardization, he said, as a compromise "offered in the hope of getting a single worldwide standard." But the opposition to the system expressed by European countries has doomed 1,125/60's chances of being a "worldwide compromise," he said. Several countries in Europe are now working together to develop an alternative